



## Education and Training: 2000-2002

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This report describes data from the WorkFirst Study (WFS). The samples were drawn from the statewide list of adults receiving welfare assistance in March 1999 (1999 cohort), October 2000 (2000 cohort) and October 2001 (2001 cohort).

1999 COHORT	3,037 interviews in 2000 1,955 re-interviews in 2001 1,400 re-interviews in 2002
2000 COHORT	1,337 interviews in 2001 749 re-interviews in 2002
2001 COHORT	1,011 interviews in 2002

WFS respondents were asked about school completion, degrees earned, and if they dropped out of school. We analyzed the reasons for dropping out of school. We also asked about participation in vocational or occupational training and for the 1999 cohort, we analyzed the relationship of training to employment status.

### FINDINGS:

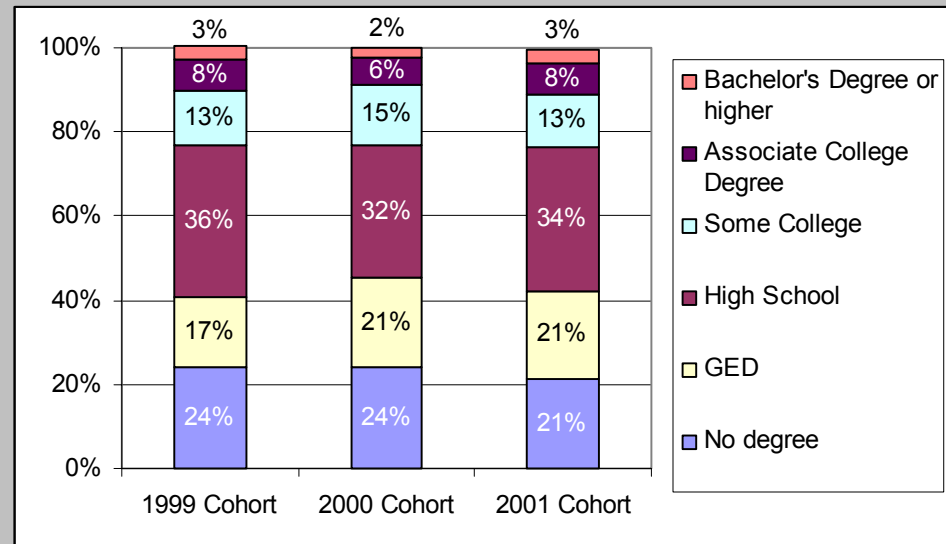
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- **Almost a quarter of the respondents reported no high school diploma or GED. Another quarter have at least some college education. The educational distribution is similar across the 1999, 2000, and 2001 cohorts.**
- **About half of the respondents dropped out of school at some point. Most dropped out at age 16 or 17 with the two most common reasons being parenthood and no interest in school.**
- **Three-quarters of the respondents have had some vocational or occupational training. The most common type of training was on-the-job training.**
- **About half of the respondents have had recent vocational or occupational training with the most common type being public vocational or technical school.**
- **For the 1999 cohort, 68 percent of those with recent training were employed in the following year; only 63 percent of those with no training were employed.**

## Educational Levels

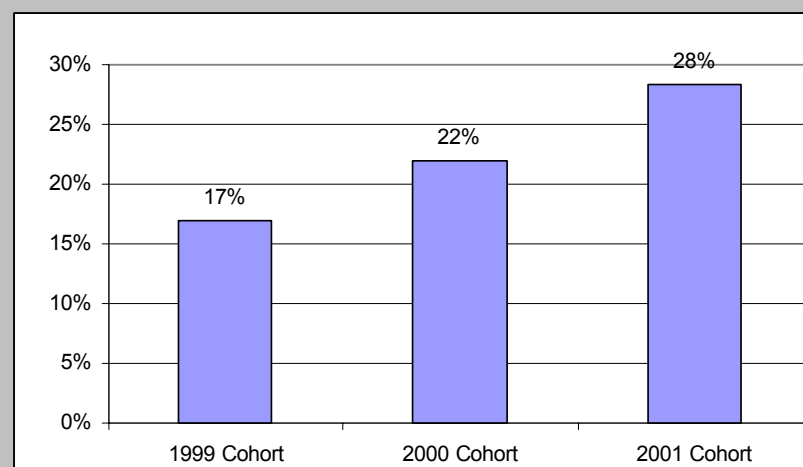
Figure 1 shows the highest degree for respondents in each cohort at the time of their initial survey. Overall, the educational distribution is similar across the three cohorts. About a quarter of each group reported no degree, but another quarter reported having attended at least some college.

**FIGURE 1:  
EDUCATION  
AT INITIAL  
SURVEY  
FOR EACH  
COHORT**



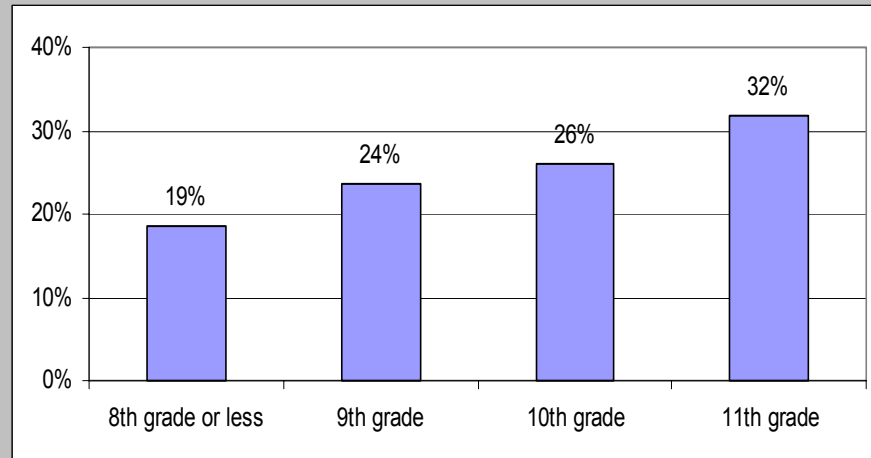
Many respondents continued to pursue education beyond the high school level as shown in Figure 2. At the time of 2002 for each cohort, a fifth to a quarter of respondents with at least a GED or high school degree reported pursuing a college degree or certificate. For each cohort, about half of these were pursuing an associate degree or bachelor's degree.

**FIGURE 2:  
% PURSUING EDUCATION  
AT 2002 SURVEY BY  
COHORT**



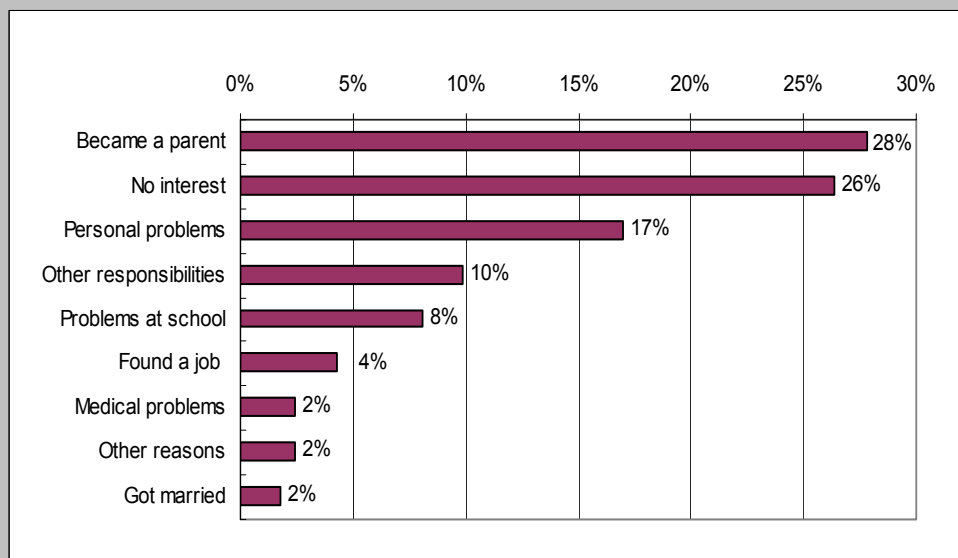
About half of the respondents reported dropping out of high school (or earlier) in all three cohorts. Most dropped out at age 16 or 17; more than half had finished their sophomore or junior year in high school. Figure 3 shows the grades completed for respondents in the 2001 cohort. This group (and the 2000 cohort) had completed somewhat less schooling than did the 1999 cohort.

**FIGURE 3:  
HIGHEST GRADE  
COMPLETED  
WHEN FIRST  
DROPPED OUT  
OF SCHOOL,  
2001 COHORT**



The two most common reasons for dropouts were parenthood and having no interest in school (Figure 4). Of those who dropped out of school, about 60 percent later returned to school and earned a degree, usually a GED. There was no significant relationship between reasons for dropping out of school and the chances of later earning a degree.

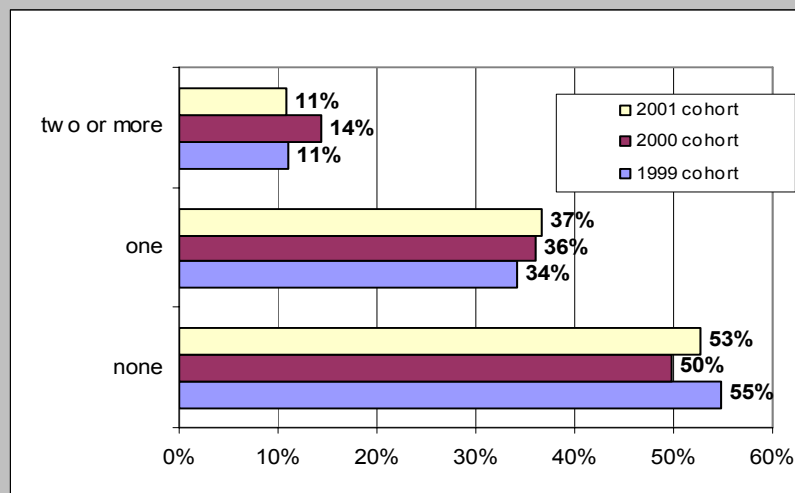
**FIGURE 4  
REASONS FOR  
DROPPING OUT  
OF SCHOOL,  
2001 COHORT**



## Vocational and Occupational Training

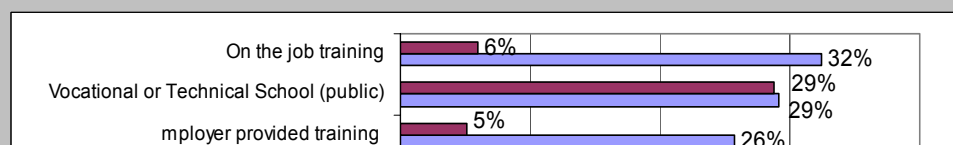
In each survey, respondents were asked about being in a formal job training program during the previous year. About half of the respondents had had some kind of recent training (Figure 5). Over 80 percent of those with training said they had completed it.

**FIGURE 5:  
TIMES RECENTLY  
IN SCHOOL  
OR A FORMAL  
JOB TRAINING  
PROGRAM  
AT INITIAL SURVEY  
BY COHORT**



Three-quarters of the respondents reported ever having any vocational or occupational training, with the most common types being on-the-job training and public vocational technical training.<sup>1</sup> Figure 6 shows the proportion of respondents in the 2001 cohort with each type of training, either recently or ever. The pattern is similar for the earlier cohorts.

**FIGURE 6:  
TYPES OF  
JOB TRAINING  
2001 COHORT**

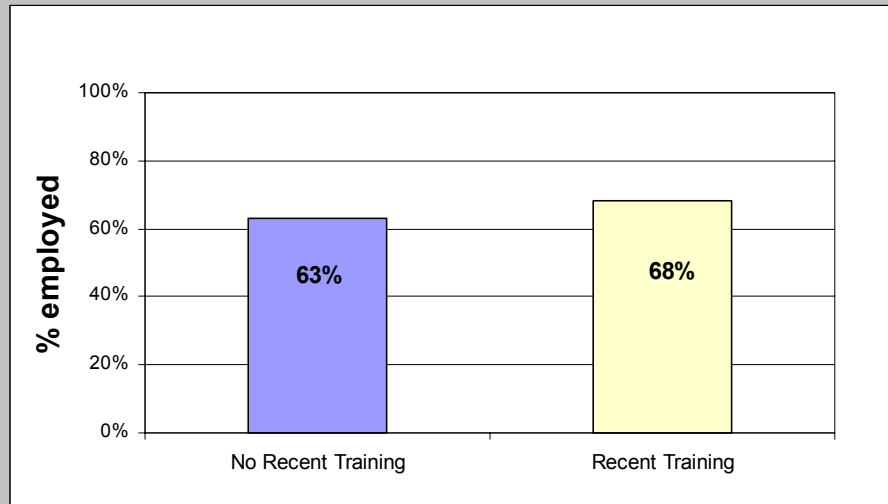


<sup>1</sup> The proportion of those reporting *on-the-job training* is higher in the 1999 cohort because later questionnaires added “*Employer provided training*” and “*Work experience program such as community jobs*” as options.

On-the-job training and vocational or technical schooling were the most common types of trainings ever had. Vocational or technical schooling and school or college were the most common types of recent training.

## Training and Employment

**FIGURE 7:  
RECENT TRAINING  
AND EMPLOYMENT  
1999 COHORT**



We analyzed the relationship between recent training and employment for respondents from the 1999 cohort. In that group, 44 percent of respondents had some vocational or occupational training from April 2000 to March 2001 and 65 percent were employed at some point during the following year (from April 2001 to March 2002).

Figure 7 shows that among those with recent training, 68 percent were employed at some time during the following year. Only 63 percent of those with no recent training were employed at some point. This difference is statistically significant, but could reflect the effects of individual motivation or characteristics on employment and training. Also, some people who were employed would have reported on-the-job training or apprenticeships.